

Make an entrance

It's the last thing you see when you leave the house in the morning, and the first thing you see when you get home. So make sure your hallway is calm and inspiring – Olivia Lidbury can help

For a striking effect, try a door colour that contrasts with your walls



Open new doors

If your hallway is dark and narrow, make a feature of your front door – both inside and out. 'It's a great way to add some drama and energy,' says Beth Dadswell of Imperfect Interiors (imperfectinteriors.co.uk), who has painted clients' doors in cheery shades of bright yellow (left) and sage green. She suggests painting the framework in the same bold colour to make it feel grander, and choosing a shade that ties in with something else at the front of the house. On the inside, consider matching the paint with a shade from a panel of stained glass, or perhaps the trim on a runner or rug. For a really striking effect, try a colour that contrasts with your walls: yellow with navy or pink with dark green work well.

Innovate with paper and paint

The hall is where first impressions of your home are made when you welcome new visitors.





Left Here, the skirting boards are painted to match the wallpaper, which is Etruscan by Little Greene, £84 a roll (littlegreene.com)

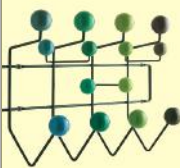
*Coordinate
woodwork,
including skirting
boards and
dado rails*

Chris Snook

**THREE
OF THE
BEST**



Coat stand, £145, **Cox & Cox** (coxandcox.co.uk)



Eames wall rack, £235, **Vitra** (johnlewis.com)



Alana copper coat stand, £149, **Made** (made.com)

Match contrasting patterns in a similar palette for an eye-catching look



Above Jaspe Stripe wallpaper, £65 a roll, **Cole & Son** (janeclayton.co.uk).

Below Ourika runner, £159, and bench, £329, **La Redoute** (laredoute.co.uk). For similar hooks, try **Cox & Cox** (coxandcox.co.uk)

'The hallway is a transitional area, so it's a great place to experiment with colour and pattern,' say Jordan Cluroe and Russell Whitehead of 2LG Studio (2lgstudio.com). 'If you cover every surface in the same pattern - including walls and ceilings - then the eye flows effortlessly around the space.' Commit to the cause by coordinating radiators and woodwork, including skirting boards and dado rails, with a colour from the wallpaper for a dramatic effect.

Take to the floor

If you are renting, or are after an easy way to inject some personality into your hall, then laying a patterned rug or runner is an instant solution. Check out La

Redoute's Ourika Berber-style runner (£159, laredoute.co.uk). H&M Home's styles are inexpensive and great to experiment with. They also come in washable cotton, a practical choice for halls. Alternative Flooring's Quirky B range will give your hall a real wow factor. It includes Liberty-print florals, dot patterns and trompe l'oeil graphics (alternativeflooring.com).

Maximise storage

In a perfect world, a stack of hanging coats and kicked-off shoes is not what anyone wants to be greeted with when opening the front door, but unless you're lucky

A patterned rug will help brighten up the space and add a 'decorated' feel



enough to have a cloak or boot room, the hallway provides much-needed space. Choosing a multifunctional unit that houses jackets and has shelves for shoes will help keep outerwear contained. Or, aligning a shoe bench with a generous coat rack above it will create a storage 'zone'.

Reduce the amount of garb you need to hang up by rotating coats to a bedroom cupboard on a seasonal basis, and apply the same rule to shoes. Choose a chic basket for gloves and hats and you've got yourself a functional – but not undesirable – new space.

Add some furniture

An entrance hall will inevitably resemble a corridor if it is left empty, so adding a slim piece of furniture like a console table can make it feel more like a room. Choose one with drawers for useful storage by the door. No space for a table? A narrow shelf – preferably positioned above a radiator if there is one, to maintain neatness – will do the same job and offer a perch for keys and change. Hanging a mirror above will make more of a focal point and create the illusion of

space. What's more, a floating shelf or a radiator cover can double up as a surface for holding plants, flowers and candles, making an attractive display for you to see immediately when you walk through the door.

Just picture it

Hanging art and photographs is a great way to add interest to narrow spaces, but there's definitely a knack to it. 'Hallways often lack depth in front of the artwork, so I always suggest choosing pieces that don't require much distance to be viewed,' advises Scarlett Colicci, founder of Projects on Walls (projectsonwalls.com), which specialises in sourcing and curating artworks for interiors. She suggests using several smaller frames, in a gallery-style display, and encourages mixing up prints, posters and personal photographs.

'I always think the more interesting wall arrangements are the ones that are unexpected and inventive,' she adds. 'Just keep the distance between each piece roughly the same, so there is some sense of continuity.'

A large mirror and a mix of lighting will make the space feel bigger



Above Interior designer Lucy Barlow (barlowandbarlow.com) has used a vintage chest in this hallway.



Right A gallery-style display by Scarlett Colicci (projectsonwalls.com)

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Position several smaller frames together for a mix of colours and styles

Hanging art and pictures is a great way to add interest to narrow spaces

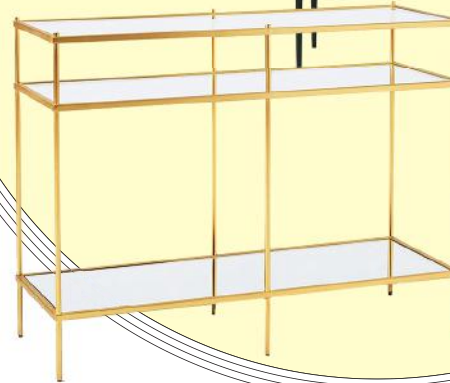
THREE OF THE BEST



Oak console, £495, Loaf (loaf.com)



Wood and marble console, £329, Swoon (swooneditions.com)



Glass console, £499, West Elm (westelm.co.uk)

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